GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:100
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2001
FUNCTIONING OF PRASAR BHARATI
M.V.CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY;SHYAMA SINGH

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Prasar Bharati have taken a decision to auction five and half hours a day on DD metro for three years to private producers by violating the recommendations of the expert Committee set up by her Ministry;

(b) if so, the facts and details in this regard;

(c) whether the Government propose to bring transparency in the functioning of Prasar Bharati; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 100 FOR ANSWE ON 27.7.2001

(a) & (b) Prasar Bharati had taken a decision to allot bulk airtime on auction basis to bring the DD-Metro channel in line with the prevailing market situation. Prasar Bharati has informed that the time slots between 7 p.m. − 9 p.m. and 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. were allotted to M/s Nine Network Australia Pty.Ltd., through an open bid process, for a period of one year, expiring on 10.9.2001 and 15.10.2001 respectively. The time slots from 10 p.m. to 0030 a.m. were already vacant. Therefore, open bids were invited for the airtime from 7 p.m. to 0030 a.m. with a floor price of Rs. 115 crores, for 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., and without any floor price for the slots from 11 p.m. to 0030 a.m. In response only, one bid was received for the 11 p.m. to 00 hours slot, from M/s Moving Pictures Company India Private Limited with an offer of Rs. 50 lakhs net. Prasar Bharati then took a decision to invite fresh bids for 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. slots without fixing any floor price. Even though three bids were received, these were considered too low and rejected.

(c) & (d) Prasar Bharati is a statutory organisation and it is fully empowered to take decisions relating to its programme management. The scheme of bulk airtime sale of slots over DD Metro is part of such programme management, and is, therefore, within the competence of Prasar Bharati. Government had not issued any instructions in this regard. For better transparency and objectivity in procurement of programmes on sponsored or commissioned basis, as well as co-production and acquisition of programmes in Doordarshan, revised guidelines have been issued and publicized by Prasar Bharati